Central Films Limited

Canada's Only Feature Motion Picture Producing Company

(Exclusive to the Canadian Moving Picture Digest)

ONE morining in September, 1935 a small group of technicians and two featured players — David Manners and Maxine Doyle — arrived at a Victoria hotel from Hollywood. A few days later, with crews and more players recruited locally, they started making a moving picture in a barn-like structure which once had housed the automobile exhibits at the annual Provincial Exhibition at the Willows Park, on the outskirts of the city.

That was the beginning of Central Films Limited, which today is the only motion picture company in Canada producing feature length pictures on a regular schedule, and which now boasts a plant as good as that of any independent producer in Hollywood.

That first picture, made in a studio devoid of all soundproofing so that every bark of a neighborhood dog filtered through onto the soundtrack and stopped production, and with the wooden pillars supporting the roof blocking anything in the nature of a long shot, surprised everyone by receiving a good reception on the British market.

Released as "The Lucky Fugitives" it was the first of a round dozen of motion pictures of every type to be turned out by Central Films up to the present time.

These movies have been made primarily for the British quota market, but they have also been released in Canada and the United States.

After "The Lucky Fugitives" the company moved into a larger building, and had it thoroughly soundproofed. In its present form the studio has a clear floor area of 12,800 square feet, permitting the erection of really large sets. There are all the necessary adjuncts in the form of dressing rooms and offices. A rotary converter supplies power for the great array of lights used in indoor sequences.

In addition Central Films has a sound truck, fitted with the latest equipment, capable of going at a moment's notice to any location, and a generator truck to power the lights outdoors.

Latest additions to the company's equipment have been a developer and printer which can handle 1,500 feet of film an hour. These two pieces of machinery, costing several thousands of dollars, do away with the necessity of sending film by air to Hollywood for processing.

The eleven pictures that have followed "The Lucky Fugitives" have been "Tugboat Princess", "Secret Patrol", "Stampede", "Fury and the Woman", "What Price Vengeance", "Woman Against the World", "Murder Goes North", "Manhattan Shakedown", "Murder Is News", "The Devil in Ermine" and "Face Work".

Among the scores of Hollywood actors and actresses who have come to Victoria as players have been such names as Wendy Barrie, Lyle Talbot, Molly Lamont, William Gargan, Ralph Forbes, Valerie Hobson, Walter C. Kelly, little Edith Fellows, Alice Moore, Jameson Thomas, Doris Lloyd, Dorothy Bradshaw and Charles Starrett.

The man responsible for the introduction of the motion picture industry to Canada on a serious scale is Kenneth J. Bishop, who has been connected with the screen since the silent days immediately after the Great War.

It has been no easy job to get the business on a firm basis in Victoria, which is a traditionally conservative city. When there had been added to that conservatism the memory of the string of fly-by-night companies which had victimized citizens on previous occasions, the new company came face to face with open opposition as well as scepticism.

Now, however, the city realizes the industry is as great an asset as any other field of enterprise. Each year Central Films puts between $300,000 and $400,000 directly into the pockets of Victorians. Perhaps more than any other industry the movies spread their money into every form of commerce from the hardware store to the power company and from the taxi stand to the interior decorating shop. In addition a large number of electricians and carpenters receive regular employment, and an equal number of people are given jobs from time to time as extras and bit players.

There is a lull in the company's activity at present, pending the final decision of the British Parliament on the Cinematograph Act, covering the quota regulations. When that is settled there are plans for the construction of a second studio and a possible contract with another major producer in the United States.

NOTES FROM THE MARITIMES

By ALICE T. FAIRWEATHER

MR. FRED GREGOR, owner and manager of the Majestic Theatre at New Waterford, N.S., is very proud of his renovated and re-decorated theatre. The Majestic has been re-modelled with a Vitrolite front, an up-to-date marquee and entirely new seats. The interior decorations are in two-tone coloring, and modernistic in design. Mr. Gregor recently visited Saint John, N.B., accompanied by Mrs. Gregor. He has been many years in the theatre business, and is one of the most popular of the Maritime exhibitors.

The F. G. Spencers to Visit Hollywood

MR. and Mrs. F. G. Spencer left recently for their annual winter trip, this year going direct to Vancouver where they will be joined by their son Gordon, the latter who has been associated with the advertising department of the F. G. Spencer Circuit. From Vancouver the party will go to Hollywood where they will remain for some time. Mr. Spencer and his family will meet at Hollywood with Mr. Louis B. Mayer, whose hospitality to his Saint John friends is well known and unfailing.

Propose Abolition of Amusement Tax

AMONG the resolutions passed by the New Brunswick Federation of Labor at its 26th annual convention held at Fredericton, New Brunswick, was one which urged the "abolition of all amusement tax on tickets costing twenty-five cents or less for the benefit of the poor man's entertainment, the motion picture show"; another recommended "that a board of examiners be set up for motion picture operators".

I.O.D.E. Attend "Victoria the Great" Showing

THE members of Picardy Chapter, Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and the Provincial Executive I.O.D.E., attended the showing of "Victoria The Great" at the Gaiety Theatre, Fredericton, N.B., after which they were entertained at the home of the Regent of the Picardy Chapter, Mrs. J. C. Barker, wife of Major Barker, Secretary to His Honor Lieutenant Governor MacLaren. All declared the film very fine in every way.

All Loew's Inc. Executives Re-Elected to Office.

DIGEST REVIEWS AND PREVIEWS

★ ★ ★

"HAPPY LANDING"

20th CENTURY-FOX

"JAY L"

THREE years ago your reviewer sat in the Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto and saw the finest exhibition of figure skating his dazzled eyes had ever beheld. The occasion was the annual Skating Carnival held here, and the star of the show was a little Norwegian miss, Sonja Henie, who before turning professional, had won the World Olympics in figure skating. On the ice, Miss Henie was the very personification of the words "beauty", "grace" and "brilliance"; off the ice, Miss Henie was just another girl, a little too plump to be called "pleasantly plump", with lovely blonde hair, but entirely lacking what Hollywood years ago named "It". This week I sat in the screening-room at the 20th Century-Fox Toronto exchange, and watched this same girl positively radiate personality, "It", or what-have-you across the Silver Screen. It was hard to realize that this dazzling beauty I was watching was the same girl I had seen three years previous.

I would like to go on record as saying that "Happy Landing" is by far the best picture Sonja Henie has made. Of course this is only her third film, but her first, "One in a Million", was one of the biggest grossers in the history of 20th Century-Fox, and I confidently predict that "Happy Landing" will outgross "One in a Million" with the greatest of ease. The picture has everything, comedy, romance, music, and the dazzling spectacles on ice for which Sonja Henie is famous. Miss Henie's performance is splendid; she is a much better actress than in her previous two pictures, and her skating, which experts declare cannot be improved, is as good as it ever was. Nor is Sonja Henie the whole picture, not by a long shot. There is also Don Ameche, her sweetheart of "One in a Million", and a No. 1 box-office attraction in this neck of the woods. Ameche's screen popularity has been greatly helped by his appearances on the Chase and Sanborn Hour, and he is up there among the best of them for box-office draw. Then there is Cesar Romero in a grand comedy role that is certain to gain him plaudits from critics and public. His work in "Happy Landing" as the egocentric "Duke Sargent" is really swell, especially in his team-work with Ethel Merman. Miss Merman is also a happy addition to the cast, and her renditions of "Hot and Happy" and "You Appeal to Me", will please your "swing" fans. Jean Hersholt, that grand character actor of "Country Doctor" fame, is another addition to the cast that will please all, and Wally Vernon, a comparative newcomer, who reminds us a great deal of Sid Silvers, comes in for some excellent comedy bits.

Don Ameche is cast as the manager of Cesar Romero, an orchestra leader and song-writer who is continually having woman-trouble. When the duo land in a small Norwegian village, on a plane flight from New York to Paris, Romero gets himself compromised with Sonja Henie, by dancing with her twice, which in that land is the same as a marriage proposal. Ameche gets him out of the jam by flying immediately to Paris, but Sonja, who imagines herself very much in love with Romero, follows him to New York. When Romero ditches Sonja for Ethel Merman, Ameche takes the girl in hand, and discovering her talent for skating, promotes her into America's greatest entertainment draw, in the process of which he falls in love with her himself, and Sonja with him. Through a misunderstanding the two are separated, but in a hysterically comical ending, everything is cleared up with Ameche and Sonja becoming Mr. and Mrs. and Romero and Ethel Merman also taking the matrimonial leap.

The picture packs a wallop of entertainment that practically forces the exhibitor to go out of his way in exploiting it. Miss Henie's present record-breaking tour is one angle that can be built-up, and Ameche's radio popularity is another factor that cannot be overlooked. For the Jean Hersholt fans, his radio appearances as "Doctor Christian" have been making him more popular than ever, and a tie-up with the Chesebrough Company is also in order. If you are playing the picture during these cold Winter days, when skating is at its peak, a natural tie-up with your local skating-club should boost the grosses, as well as a display tie-up with sporting goods stores.

Picture, as I saw it, is slightly long, and can stand cutting, but that will probably be done before it reaches you. One real hit song is included in the score, "A Gypsy Told Me", and your local music stores will probably cooperate on exploitation.

★ ★ +

"GOLD IS WHERE YOU FIND IT"

WARNER BROTHERS

AN epic of the California of the 1870's, featuring the struggle between the wheat farmers of the Sacramento Valley and the hydraulic miners, "Gold Is Where You Find It" comes to the screen a fine example of Technicolor, and a splendid drama. Unnecessary in this reviewer's opinion is the over-long prologue, in which a back-stage voice endeavours to acquaint you with the setting of the picture, while the camera displays in color the beauty of the land. This can easily be cut to the improvement of the production.

Taken from the Cosmopolitan Magazine serial by Clements Ripley, the picture introduces George Brent as leader of the gang of hydraulic miners bent on getting the gold out of the hills surrounding the Sacramento Valley, in spite of the wheat farmers whose lands they

CLASSIFICATION GUIDE

★★★ Excellent
★★ Very Good
★ Good
• Fair or Poor

20th Century-Fox's "Happy Landing" Good For $110,000 In 2 Weeks, Roxy, N.Y. Held Over 3rd Week.

DIGEST REVIEWS AND PREVIEWS

are ruining. The wheat farmers are headed by Claude Rains. Olivia de Havilland is cast as Rains' daughter, and when Brent meets the dazzling Olivia, the inevitable happens, and we find the leader of the miners in love with the farmer's daughter (not a joke). After sundry mishappenings including an attempt by Margaret Lindsay, wife of Rains' brother, to make a play for Brent, and finally the death at the hands of Brent's foreman of Olivia's brother, Tim Holt, Brent changes sides and saves the farmers from a massacre, by blowing up a dam and flooding the miners out.

Performances of the whole cast are uniformly excellent, with perhaps Rains' work, and a character bit by George Hayes marked for special attention. The real star of the picture, however, is once again Mother Nature, for she is more beautiful in this picture than we have ever seen her, and great credit is due Pol Polito for his work behind the camera. The direction of Michael Curtiz is up to the Curtiz par, which is the best, and nothing but the best.

Exhibitors should concentrate on the splendor of the color in advertising the picture, and secondly will be well advised to sell it as an action-packed drama of California's early days. Inasmuch as the mood for Westerns is again in evidence, patrons should be made to realize that this is a really super-super Western, sans the Indians.

Running time—90 minutes.

EXCHANGE AND EXHIBITOR NOTES

J. J. Fitzgibbons, Famous Players, was in Montreal this week.

B. A. Garson, Electra Theatre, Montreal, a Toronto visitor.

Haskell Masters, United Artists, has gone to the Maritimes.

Miss Mary Nolan, who does the booking for the Rexy and Columbia theatres in Ottawa, was in Toronto this week.

Wolfe Cohen, Warner Bros., left Thursday for a trip to Canada's West Coast, with intermittent stops.

The meeting of the Ontario Conciliation Committee of the Film Board of Trade, was postponed until Wednesday, February 16th, due to the absence from Toronto of several of the members of the Committee.

Don Stapleton, Centre Theatre, Ottawa, in Toronto this week.

S. Fingold, Queen's Theatre, Harriston, a Queen City visitor.

"Pay F."

CONKLIN IN WINNIPEG

By J. J. CONKLIN

WINNIPEG — Terming the operation of the Canadian Performing Rights Society, Ltd., a "legalized racket," W. R. Sexsmith, Portage La Prairie legislative member in the Manitoba legislature, received support from all sides of the house January 28, when he presented a resolution urging that the Dominion government curtail its activities.

Marcus Hyman, Winnipeg, and Hon. W. J. Major, attorney-general, both expressed complete sympathy with the spirit of the resolution, but felt it did not go far enough. J. S. Lamont, of Iberville, added that he felt it was time "the public got up in arms". The resolution was tabled to enable the mover to work out amendments with representatives of other groups.

Mr. Sexsmith's resolution asked that the Dominion government enact legislation to bar the Performing Rights Society from charging licence fees against churches, colleges, schools, religious, charitable, fraternal, community or other organizations of like nature, parks, agricultural fairs and small private operators such as restaurants, hotels and rinks, where radios or gramaphones were used, but no admission charged.

The society, incorporated in Canada in 1925 with an issue of 10,000 shares—only two being held by Canadians —was tied up with similar associations throughout the world, the mover said, presumably to collect royalties for authors, publishers and arrangers of music and others in similar lines of work.

While in favor of giving the workman his due, Mr. Sexsmith could not see why the organization should, after charging heavy fees against radio stations, charge license fees against small storekeepers and others.

There had been an uproar in 1936 at the arbitrary rates charged and parliament, after securing a report through a commission, had set-up an appeal board which reduced the license rates. Even this did not meet the situation.

Describing the operations of the "octupus" he referred to figures taken from the society's own books in 1936. Of each $30 collected it was shown that $29.60 was set against operation and collection. The man the society professed to represent secured only 40 cents.

Radio stations were taxed heavily. Throughout Canada last year they paid $70,000, of which $5,949 was paid by the three Manitoba stations.

The "little man" did not have much chance in fighting the powerful organization. If it found a piece of its copyrighted music—and this covered nearly all selections —had come over his radio in a public place, they asked for an injunction against him. Although he might have to pay only a $10 fee he would be faced with a bill of $60 to $100 for costs.

"I am enraged at the thought that our courts are used by these foreign racketeers," said Mr. Hyman, urging that the resolution be made stronger. He felt that the judges could well refuse injuctions asked by the company on the ground that they were inequitable. To give private people a right to tax other citizens was ridiculous.

Montreal Likes Warner's "Hollywood Hotel" At $9,000, Palace Theatre.

DIGES
CEL

WILL H. HAYS

WILL H. HAYS, familiarly known as the Industry's "Czar", was born at Sullivan, Ind., November 5th, 1879. He was well-known in the political arena as an organizer and a most forceful campaigner, being born with a gift of speech and a flow of ideas. His advent in politics found him allied to the Republican Party, and in 1914 he was chairman of the central committee of Indiana for his party. In 1918 he was chairman of the national committee of the Republican Party, and shortly after that was appointed Postmaster-General of the U.S., in the cabinet of President Harding. In 1922, Mr. Hays resigned from the government to take on position of president of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors' Ass'n, which position he holds today. In 1935 his contract with the MPPDA was renewed for another term of five years, following the expiration of the previous contract in 1936. He was admitted to the bar at the age of 21, holding the post of city attorney in Sullivan from 1910-1913. He was the first of the "big men" outside of the Industry to be invited in as a Power.

HERBERT WILCOX

HERBERT WILCOX, pioneer British film producer is chairman and managing director of the Herbert Wilcox Productions Ltd., director of British and Dominions Film Co. Ltd., and a director of General Film Distributors, as well as president of the recently-formed Imperator Films. Born at Cork, Ireland, 1891, Wilcox entered the film business in 1919, and was the producer and director of some of the best and most pretentious British silent films, his pictures securing a market in America. His outstanding star discovery was Anna Neagle whom he carefully built-up to stardom following the American pattern, and as a result of his efforts in this direction, Miss Neagle now enjoys a leading position not only in Great Britain, but also in the U.S., and in foreign countries. Wilcox recently entered into a contractual agreement with RKO Distributing Corp. of America, through which several of his features will be given world-wide distribution. His most successful production to date, is of course, "Victoria The Great".

RITY
SERIES

LOUIS B. MAYER

LOUIS B. MAYER, vice-president in charge of production for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, was born, July 4th, 1885. He was educated in Saint John, N.B., and later was active in various fields at Montreal, Que. His first theatrical venture was the remodelling and opening of an old theatre at Haverhill, Mass., and in a few years the five theatres in Haverhill were under his management. In partnership with Nat Gordon, Louis Mayer formed the dominant theatre chain of New England, later deserting the theatre end to enter into the exchange business, where he soon became a leading factor. When the merger of several interests, including Metro and Samuel Goldwyn was being formulated, Louis B. Mayer became the third name in the trademark, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and he is accepted as the man whose genius has kept M-G-M the producers of the most consistently good program of pictures on the film market. Louis B. Mayor is an orator, an excellent organizer, and has not only helped his own company in S. California from a legislative angle, but as president of the Motion Picture Producers' Ass'n has greatly assisted the entire Industry. His interest and vision in respect to British Film Production was an important factor in crystallizing the plans of his company toward this objective.

HAL ROACH

HAL ROACH, president of the Hal Roach Studios, Inc., was born at Elmira, N.Y., January 14th, 1892. His film career started off at Universal City, as a cowboy, following a "trucking career" in Alaska and Los Angeles. While drawing his $25 per week as a cowboy, Hal Roach met Harold Lloyd, and joining their forces they produced a picture which was sold for $850. Prior to the building of his studio at Culver City, Roach produced pictures at Glendale, Calif., and then at a studio on Santa Monica Blvd., where the "Lonesome Luke" comedies were made. In 1936 he won the Academy Award for the best short subject produced, and his comedy team of Laurel and Hardy has won the acclaim of millions. Last year he advanced from the short-subject field, to produce "Topper", a full-length feature that won popular acclaim. He is at present busy making another full-length feature picture, which promises to be even better than "Topper".

LONDON ROUNDABOUT

By DENNISON THORNTON

Bernard Shaw Changes His Mind

AFTER vowing four years ago never again to part with the screen rights of any of his stage plays; after spurning Samuel Goldwyn's gold and turning down a £50,000 offer for "The Devil's Disciple" from another Hollywood company, George Bernard Shaw has at last been persuaded to change his mind.

He has granted permission for a British film version of "Pygmalion" which Pascal Productions are now making at the Pinewood studios here.

The stars are Leslie Howard, fresh from his American triumphs in "The Petrified Forest", "Stand In" and "It's Love I'm After"; and Wendy Hiller, a 23-year old English girl who became an overnight sensation by her acting in the London and New York stage productions of "Love on the Dole".

The man who persuaded Bernard Shaw to relent in his stand against film versions of his plays, after Hollywood had given up trying, is continental producer Gabriel Pascal.

Mr. Pascal, a former lieutenant in the Hungarian hussars, and once a producer in Hollywood, will now celebrate his Shavian victory by making "Pygmalion" at a cost of £150,000.

He is determined, he says, to make it a picture that will bring prestige to the British Film Industry.

Leslie Howard and Anthony Asquith Co-directors

THE picture is being co-directed by Anthony Asquith (son of the Countess of Oxford) whose last film was the successful "I Stand Condemned", and Leslie Howard whose first directorial assignment this is.

The scenario of "Pygmalion" has been written by W. P. Lipscomb, the young British author and playwright of "Clive of India" fame.

Two years ago Mr. Lipscomb went to Hollywood. He stayed there long enough to write the scenarios of "Les Miserables", "A Message To Garcia" and "Lloyd's of London", and to hear producer Darryl Zanuck call him "the finest script man on the coast".

Bernard Shaw has given Lipscomb a free hand with the "Pygmalion" script, and has agreed not to interfere in any way with the actual production of the picture.

"Mr. Asquith and Mr. Howard are capable men," says Mr. Shaw. "They know their job just as well as I know mine. They will not let me down."

Although G. B. S. at first refused to even see his film being made, he has now consented to "look in" at the studios from time to time — just to inspire the producers with confidence and courage, as he puts it.

At present Mr. Shaw is devising a new ending for the film so that it will not leave the audience "up in the air" as it does in the original play.

But nobody, including G. B. S. himself, yet knows what the new ending is going to be.

Incidentally, the 'naughty' word in the play which once shocked London audiences and got the piece and its author some nice world-wide publicity is being retained in the film.

This is the word that is spoken by the character of Eliza Doolittle, the dustman's daughter who is introduced into society with such devastating results. "Not bloody likely!", she says causing the late Sir James Barrie, who attended the first performance of the play, to exclaim: "Oh, this won't do at all!"

So unless anything unforeseen occurs, the producers will put the awful word on celluloid.

"It is the natural thing for Eliza to say," explains Leslie Howard, "and if the adjective is not unduly emphasized it cannot be considered blasphemous or obscene.

"In any case, the censors did not object to Edmund Gwenn using the word in the film version of 'The Good Companions'. So why should he object in our case?"

Third Shavian Play to be Filmed

"PYGMALION" is the third Bernard Shaw play to be produced as a motion picture. "Arms and the Man" and "How he Lied to her Husband" were made in England four years ago. They were not a success, due chiefly to Bernard Shaw's insistence that stage and not cinema technique should be used in front of the cameras.

But now G. B. S. is willing to give producers a freer hand, although he still refuses to admit that he knows less about film-making than the film-makers themselves.

"The only reason," he says, "that I am not having anything to do with the direction of 'Pygmalion' is that I cannot, at my age, undertake it myself."

Empress Theatre to be Rebuilt

Vernon, B.C.—A completely re-constructed and remodelled Empress Theatre will be ready for the public by the Spring, according to Richard Curtis, the architect, and officials of Famous Players Canadian Corp. Plans are already drawn, and have been forwarded to the Famous Players executives for approval. The present frontage of 34 feet will be extended the full width of the property, making a frontage of 75 feet. Adjoining the theatre and taking approximately 18 feet from the frontage, will be a completely modern store, and the remainder will be used by a modern theatre front, with a marquee covering the full frontage. The front will be stuccoed in colors. The theatre will seat 578 persons in the orchestra and 292 in the balcony. The new screen will measure 18 feet by 12 feet. The theatre, according to present plans, will be air-cooled in the summer, and air-heated in the winter.

Walter Bennett manages the Empress for the Famous Players chain.

Government to Aid Canadian Film Industry

Victoria, B.C.—Hon. W. J. Asselstine, minister of trade and industry in the British Columbia provincial government, has agreed to make representations to the Federal Government in regard to the proposed amendment to the British Film Quota laws, which would remove Canadian films from the existing quotas, and confine them to films made in the British Isles or in British colonies, excluding the Dominions. This would mean the ruin of Central Films, Canada's only production unit. It is expected that the Federal Government will bring the matter to the attention of the British Government.

"Hurricane"--Goldwyn-U.A.--Big $15,000 3rd Week, United Artists, Chicago.

RAY PRESENTS

(*Continued from Page 4*)

It has been stated that no Government representative will be empowered to enter a man's home in search of hidden radios, providing such householder has more than one radio in his possession, when the new increase in taxes becomes the law of this fair land of Canada.

THERE is some justification in the increase to $2.50 for the radio license, providing the programs are improved. At the present time there is nothing particularly inspiring about the CBC programs, but should the Government announce a disposition to improve the Quality of its programs, becoming as it where, a patron of Arts and Letters, for which incidentally, the public furnishes the money by way of such patronage, I feel that there will be little public objection to such an increase.

The increase, however, per set is one which will meet with very strong opposition, as a general rule only one set is used at a time. No house, or very few homes would have two or more radio sets going at the same time, with either the same program or different programs tuned in, on each set.

As far as the radio in the car is concerned, when it is being used, the householder is not using his set in his house. Incidentally, how many radios do you hear on the city streets?

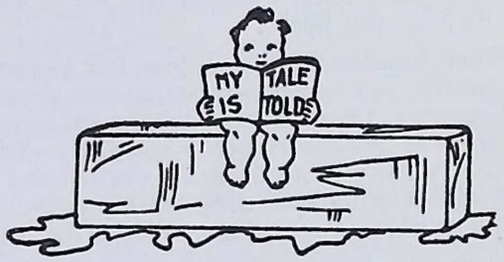
Taking into consideration the radio programs obtained while driving in cars, no one has yet found such service worth paying for, because of static conditions governing the use of radios while driving, occasioned by the multipilicity of wires, tracks, and other obstacles which interfere with the transmission of sound.

THERE is no comparison between the entertainment which the motion picture furnishes, and the radio, for the motion picture not only gives you an entertainment which you can hear, but also one which presents the entertainment value derived through seeing, NOT FORGETTING THAT THE GREATEST ARTISTS OF THE WORLD HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY ON THE SCREEN TO GIVE YOU THEIR COMBINED ART AND ARTISTRY FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT, you see as well as hear them.

Entertainment should be utilized by the Government to make people forget taxes, instead of being used as a medium for the collection of more taxes. The tax burden at the present time is heavy, it is a source of constant irritation and complaint, principally because intelligent people see no way out from its burden.

Unemployement which is the greatest contributing factor to taxation, plus defensive measures, by way of increased armament programs, the latter induced through the militaristic and aggresive attitude of those nations who have the war complex, combine to take the very life and heart out of the workers of the world. By this latter class I not only refer to the labourers who work by the sweat of their hands, but those who ALSO WORK BY THE SWEAT OF THEIR BROW, to keep trade and commerce, production and distribution progressing on a balanced keel in a world today, which doesn't know whether it is coming or going.

The investigation of an alleged Radio Combine may change the whole face of the matter, and give the government some ideas in connection with its control of radio, AND TO WHAT GREAT USE IT MAY ASCEND.



I.O.D.E. Plan British Pictures Week

Sherbrooke, Que. — The Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire in Sherbrooke, met recently to formulate plans for the showing of British Films during Education Week, in accordance with the creed of the I.O.D.E., "One King, One Flag, One Empire". Mrs. W. E. Loomis, Municipal Regent of Sherbrooke, presided, and Mrs. F. C. Churchill, municipal film convenor, was given full authorization by the large group present, to arrange for the showing of British pictures during Education Week.

Ottawa's First Exhibitor Dies

Ottawa, Ont.—Thomas A. Spence, the first man to exhibit motion pictures in Ottawa, died in Montreal last week. A son of the late J. B. Spence, he received his early education here, but moved to Montreal over forty years ago. Surviving are his widow, one brother, one sister, and two nephews.

Quintuplets Defeat Film Director

North Bay, Ont.—Director F. R. Donovan of the Pathe News troupe which was recently in town making a picture of the famous Dionne Quintuplets, lost a bet with Cameraman Tom Hogan that he could distinguish all the children. He named three of the Quins correctly, but missed up on Marie. Before the party left, they had a screening of their work at the Capitol Theatre here.

Ray Tubman Host to Club

Ottawa, Ont.—Members of the Mothers' Club of the Central Ottawa Boys' Club are indebted to Manager Ray Tubman of the Capitol Theatre, for his recent kindness in permitting the members of the club to see the new Greta Garbo picture, "Conquest" free of charge.

Your Paid Subscription to The Digest Signifies Your Support of Canada's Leading Film Trade Paper. Special Rates--$2.00 for 1 Year, $5.00 for 3 Years

WASHINGTON FILM DIGEST

By GEORGE W. MEHRTENS

WASHINGTON, D.C., Jan. 31—(CTP)

WITH the first round of the now historic battle of the century between the Allied States Motion Picture Exhibitors and the M.P.T.O.A. over, and both sides in a neutral corner, Industry interest during the breathing spell centers on Capitol Hill, and what legislation will possibly be passed during the present session to settle present difficulties of production, exhibition and distribution. The main bone of contention is of course, Congressman Lyle Boren, of Oklahoma, who as yet has not introduced his Industry divorce bill, but is expected to within the next few weeks.

The Boren measure, if passed, bids fair to just blow up the Industry, and for that reason is not given much chance of passing. Obviously the Oklahoma Congressman is biting off more than he can chew. Equally obvious is the fact that when the bill is finally drafted and introduced, it will have to bare the closest scrutiny of the three major factors of the Motion Picture Industry.

Boren himself declares that he is still holding conferences with leaders in the Industry, motion picture groups and only recently has visited the Department of Justice to go over the anti-trust phases of the proposed measure. Together with this, Boren has also been in conference and is working more than closely with Congressman Sam Hobbs. Observers here feel confident that Hobbs will not press his pending bill but rather will incorporate the highlights of his measure into that now being prepared by Boren.

Allied's flat statement of no cooperation with the Industry, itself leads to the belief that the next step will have to be made from Capitol Hill. When the Boren measure is finally drafted it is expected it will not be difficult to see the firm hand of Allied States Exhibitors behind it.

Films Protect Government Records

COMPLETION of one of the biggest photographic jobs of its kind, undertaken to safeguard old-age insurance records, was announced this week by the Social Securities Board.

On two 16 millimeter films, the type used in small motion picture cameras, the names and social security account numbers of more than 37,000,000 applicants have been reproduced. These negatives also contain statements of age, name of parents, and other facts furnished in applying for social security.

The photographing was not begun until several months after the first applications for account numbers were received by the board, but cameras are now abreast of numbers assigned and hereafter will be used only to keep pace with the incoming flow of applications.

Utilizing projectors which enlarge the picture to about the size of the original application form, record-keeping system operators are working with photographic enlargements instead of application cards. The applications are stored in 600 filing cabinets, occupying more than 5,000 square feet of floor space. The films occupy only 10 filing cabinets.

In addition to facilitating the work of maintaining wage records, the photographic duplicates will serve as insurance against confusion that could result from destruction or damage of original cards. If a part of the accounting records should be destroyed by fire, either the cases or the films might be saved. In the event of the destruction of both, there would still remain a second set of negatives of the films. These are to be stored in fireproof vaults. All record of the Board are held confidential.

American Film Exports on the Increase

PRELIMINARY figures of American motion picture film exports for 1937, show a 6,000,000 feet increase in negative and positive sound and silent films over those exported during 1936, according to a compilation made by Nathan D. Golden, Chief of the Motion Picture Division of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce.

During the year 1937 a total of 215,721,956 linear feet of motion picture film, with a declared value of $4,797,641, were exported to all markets of the world, as compared with 209,651,404 linear feet, with a declared value of $4,531,639 for the year 1936.

The United Kingdom, our best revenue producing market, Mr. Golden point out, was second in point of footage. There were exported to the market a total of 15,432,385 feet with a value of $396,627 during the year 1937 as against a total of 16,210,307 linear feet valued at $443,462 during the year 1936.

Argentina continues to be our largest consumer of motion pictures in point of footage. During 1937, 17,213,406 linear feet of American sound pictures with a declared value of $337,638 were exported, as compared with 18,036,629 feet valued at $323,274 during 1936.

Exports of motion picture equipment continue to rise, according to Mr. Golden. During the year 1937 a total of 1,625 standard guage 35 mm. motion picture projectors valued at $449,142 were exported as compared with 1,454 projectors valued at $383,078 during the year 1936.

For the first time exports of sound equipment, recording and reproducing, are shown separately. During 1937 $1,745,322 worth of American sound reproducing equipment and $535,639 worth of sound recording equipment making a total of $2,280,961 of American sound equipment were exported to foreign markets, as against a total of $2,105,288 exported during the year 1936.

Theatre Equipment
and
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Projectors and Parts.
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EVERYTHING FOR THE THEATRE FROM SHEET TO STREET

Leo Spitz Denies Rumour of Resignation As President RKO Radio.

BRITISH FILM DIGEST

By WARD SHAFTESBURY

FOR several months past, certain influential personalities in the British Film Industry have been agitating for an increase in general admission prices. They advance arguments seemingly plausible and their recommendation is a tempting one. The gist of the theme has to do with the rising costs of production and exhibition — they couple this with the "tremendous competition of counter attractions" and they conclude that the public should be persuaded to pay "just a little more".

To the small exhibitor, struggling to pay high film rental, heavy rates and taxes and salaries, the prospect of a rise in income, however small, sounds very attractive. On the face of it, an increase of tuppence per seat can't hurt anyone. Everyone else is raising their prices — why shouldn't the exhibitor?

Actually, there is a great danger in such an action. It is difficult for the American mind to realize that pennies in England are like dimes in the States. The average wage is still very little more than eleven dollars a week and this has to provide for an average family of three and a half people. Food prices have been rising slowly, taxation is heavy, and wages have not advanced at the same rate as the cost of living. The average Englishman has to think about every penny he spends — when budgets are so limited, a rise in cinema costs is going to keep thousands of picture-goers at home beside the radio. We are not exaggerating when we say that the general public cannot and will not pay more for their cinema entertainment. But that is not all!

If and when the admission prices are raised, rentals will also be raised. It is our opinion that the renters themselves are to a great degree responsible for the present agitation for higher prices. Even if they do not contemplate increasing flat rentals,, they are none the less anxixous to derive more from their percentage bookings— this is I think more true of the British than of foreign renters. The latter's pictures spin enough money as it is to satisfy the renting company, the former are not in so happy a position.

In the present uncertain times, we feel that it is much more important for the Exhibitor to retain the good-will of his public than to risk it for the sake of a possible extra ten shilling note.

Fifteen Productions Promised by Korda

AT long last, Alexander Korda has arrived back in England. He has brought back with him news of a definite program of fifteen productions for 1938 to be made at Denham. Each picture will bear an average cost of well over half a million dollars and three or four will be in Technicolor. I understand that the financial arrangements have already been made and that several well-known American stars will be engaged. The titles of four of the scheduled pictures have already been annouced — "The Four Feathers", a film of the Russian ballet in colour; "Lawrence of Arabia"; R. C. Sherriff's "King's Messenger" and "Bicycle for Two". Korda declared categorically that the deal with United Artists is dead and beyond possibility of resurrection — his own relations with the renting company are unchanged. It is pleasing to know that Denham at least will be kept busy during the coming year. From what I can gather, the recent long spells of inactivity have been causing great hardships in the surrounding villages where live most of the technicians and carpenters employed at the Studio.

A.B.C. Seeking New Capital

JOHN MAXWELL'S Associated British Corporation is making a bid for an additional £1,000,000 capital. The directors are offering 1,000,000 ordinary shares of 5s. each at 14s. 9d. per share to present shareholders in the Corporation. It is a mark of singular well-being in this critical period in the British Film Industry's affairs that a film company can successfully raise so much new capital. Last year the company paid a total dividend of 18 per cent less tax — an exceptional showing, and it is hoped that this fresh capital will increase the net earnings for the coming year. The Corporation has net assets of over five million dollars.

Columbia Comedy Given Big Send Off

"THE AWFUL TRUTH", Columbia's superb light comedy hit with a re-vamped Irene Dunne and the same carefree Cary Grant as co-stars is to have a real send off next week — a gala premiere at the Regal, Marble Arch, in aid of the Royal Waterloo Hospital.

Fit for a King

THE King's taste in films ran to M-G-M productions during his recent holiday at Sandringham. He saw "Marie Walewska" ("Conquest") starring Greta Garbo and Charles Boyer; "Topper" with Connie Bennett, Cary Grant and Roland Young; and Edward G. Robinson's "The Last Gangster".

U.A.'s Record Business

UNITED ARTISTS are having great success with "The Prisoner of Zenda" at the Marble Arch Pavilion— the picture has just been retained for a third week. I understand that this same picture is having grand runs in Copenhagen and Stockholm where it is playing to capacity audiences. U.A.'s "A Star Is Born" is doing phenomenal business at Cardiff and broke all records at Nottingham, Derby and Bournemouth. The same renter's "Knight Without Armour" gave the Gaumont, Manchester, its best week since the cinema opened.

News from the Studios

DIANA CHURCHILL, that charming sophisticate of the London stage, is starring in "Lover's Knot", Associated British's new comedy romance which went into production last Friday at Elstree. Jean Muir, well-known Hollywood starlet, is also in the cast. Diana appears as the younger sister who has to stay at home and do the housework while her elder sister gads about with the glamour-boys . . . George King completed his "John Halifax, Gentleman" last week — saw a very interesting model of an early steam engine in one scene . . . Will Hay's new comedy for Gainsborough will be "Convict 99" — as the prison governor — Moore Marriott assists as Jeremiah Harbottle, a toothless old convict who has been tunnelling to make his escape from Blackdown Jail for 40 years and who is annoyed at the fact that within two weeks of Will's arrival at the prison he is to be set free.

"Snow White" 3rd Week, Radio City Music Hall, Outgrosses First Two Weeks. Goes 4th Week, Possibly 5th.

BE A GOOD GIRL

By CERVANTES III.

THE editor of a "very little paper" published at Toronto is a woman, called, Stella, that is, we call her, Stella, because she is a very nice woman, who suddenly developed an ability to write good poetry a few years ago.

You should read her poetry, it is very pleasing. Her husband, by the way, has been building some theatres for Independents in Canada.

Through no fault of her own she became the editor of the "very little film paper" previously referred to; and in which leading articles recently appeared mentioning a condition of Film monopoly in Canada, most obnoxious to the editor of the "very little paper", and very, very obnoxious to those who happened to be mentioned.

Soon after, we learned that the power behind the throne of this "very little paper" was negotiating a deal with the very Interests to which he had been editorially opposed; and that had it not been for "insurmountable difficulties" — the quotes belong to the "very little paper" — a merger would have gone through, which would have made the Interests previously looked upon as The Enemy, in the position of being the BIG BOSS FRIEND.

We could talk a good deal about Independence, its uses and abuses, how it serves and how it is being "served", that is "dished up" for bologney consumption. But what's the use?

Those of us who are veterans in Motion Pictures here in Canada know the history of our Industry here, we also know the politics as it is played, and the newcomers, in time, they too will learn, that is if they remain long enough in Motion Pictures.

As for Stella, her motion picture knowledge and experience is so limited. Her introduction to our Industry was through the "very little paper", and all she knows is summed up in that one year's editorship, so she is free from blame, even if her editorial ride on Don Quixote's nag brought her to The Digest that editorially looked as much of a puzzle to her, as the lack of vision on the part of her boss appeared confusing to us.

We could tell you a lot, Stella, but you're a highbrow in relationship to Motion Pictures, you are an intellectual who could only meet us on a soul plane, so be a good girl, Stella, we like you personally; learn the business if you intend that your present associations with it shall not be a Strange Interlude.

In a few years from now, if you are still one of us, we will give you what may be interpreted as a psychoanalysis of the Industry in Canada, more familiarly called, "the lowdown".

Projectionist Dies Suddenly

Toronto, Ont.—The old adage, "The Show Must Go On", was never more clearly shown than last Saturday night at the Prince of Wales Theatre, when Daniel Odette, the theatre's projectionist dropped dead suddenly while operating the projector. The second operator took over immediately, and the theatre patrons were completely ignorant of the tragedy. According to officials of the operators' union, a fire would have definitely broken out if there had not been two operators in the booth. A Provincial statute in Ontario and British Columbia requires that there always be two operators in the projection booths of theatres.

Mr. Odette was a cousin of the Ontario Liquor Commissioner, and a son of the late Captain George Odette, well-known Great Lakes character.

IT IS TO LAUGH

By MERRIL LEA

SCREEN Actors Guild turned down proposal of the International Association for Identification, to fingerprint actors and all workers in the film industry. It seems they don't have any trouble detecting who "stole" the show.

* * *

Caged carrier pigeons were delivered to notables inviting them to attend the opening of "The Goldwyn Follies" at Miami. The favoured ones, were instructed to take the note attached to the cage and place it in the container on the pigeon's leg and release the bird to signify their acceptance. No chance to pigeon-hole that invitation!

* * *

When Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer advertise their product as the "talk" of the Industry, they mean it. They've installed the largest switchboard in the film area — with a capacity of 900 calls.

* * *

Sally Rand, at the AMPA Luncheon held at the International Casino, New York, gave some practical points on showmanship. Said Sally, "The advertising and publicity men sitting in New York, direct their efforts too much in behalf of Broadway and the large key city theatres, paying too little attention to the smaller towns". We always knew she had a practical streak — think of the money she saves on clothes.

* * *

Noticed a drunk trying several times to navigate the revolving door of a local hotel. After several attempts he gave up in disgust and leaned despondently against a lamp post.

A man came along the street and walked into the door. As it revolved the other side revealed a pretty girl stepping from it.

The drunk looked intently at her, and remarked, "It's a good trick but I shtill don' shee wha' that guy did with hish clothes!"

* * *

Colour in the film industry is becoming increasingly important. Not only technicolor, but whether a picture is produced in black or red seems to make a difference.

* * *

A man named Garcia is now head of the American Cigar Manufacturer's Association. The kind of "A Message To Garcia" he'd like to see, is an order for ten thousand straight Havanas.

* * *

Want Ad appearing in the Sunday Detroit News:—

"FOUND—The most interesting movies in town, so interesting that folks walk off without their belongings. We have the following on hand: 41 *hats and caps,* 15 *scarfs,* 10 *pairs of gloves, one sweater,* 15 *odd gloves,* 4 *belts. Owners please claim above at Century Theatre.*

* * *

Hollywood picture title — a moral lesson! Recently, 20th Century-Fox's "You Can't Have Everything" — played at the prison theatre, Trenton, N.J.

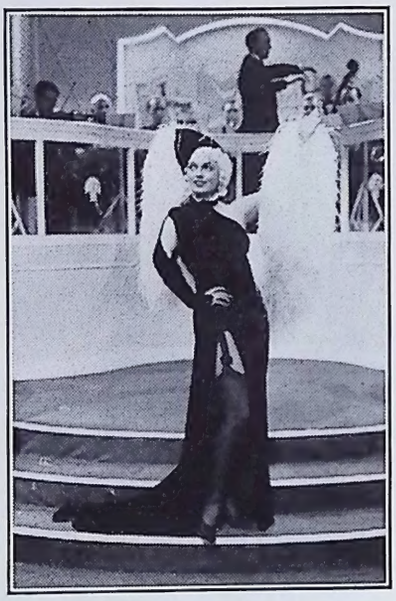
New Theatre to be Built in Halifax

Halifax, N.S.—Work will start about March 1st on the new theatre to replace the Gaiety Theatre, which was destroyed by fire recently. The new house, which is situated at 566 Barrington St., and owned by T. P. McCartney, will seat 700. House will cost approximately $40,000, and will be of fireproof brick construction.

Monogram's "Boy of the Streets" Excellent $19,000 On 2 Week Run, Globe, N.Y.

SHOOTING THE STARS

"LORD JEFF" story of the famed Barnado's Homes for British orphans, and of the Homes' nautical training school, will be FREDDIE BARTHOLOMEW'S next vehicle for M-G-M; apart from Freddie, no other casting assignments have yet been made, but NAT LEVINE will produce . . . HENRY FONDA has been selected for the leading male role opposite MADELEINE CARROLL in the new WALTER WANGER production, tentatively titled "THE RIVER IS BLUE"; WILLIAM DIETERLE, borrowed from Warner Bros. will direct the picture for release through UNITED ARTISTS . . . CONSTANCE MOORE has been cast as leading lady with JOHN KING in UNIVERSAL'S "STATE POLICE"; other additions to the cast include David Oliver, William Lundigan, Larry Blake, George Cleveland and Billy Wayne . . . yesterday (Friday) was the release date set for COLUMBIA'S "LITTLE MISS ROUGHNECK", co-starring EDITH FELLOWS and LEO CARRILLO; Margaret Irving, Scott Colton, Jacqueline Wells and Thurston Hall head a large supporting cast, which AUBREY SCOTTO directed . . . VICTOR McLAGLEN and BRIAN DONLEVY, whose last assignment was the GRACIE FIELDS British picture, "HE WAS HER MAN", will be together in "BATTLE OF BROADWAY", which is due to go before the cameras at 20TH CENTURY-FOX within two weeks . . . "WHITE BANNERS," based on the best-seller by LLOYD C. DOUGLAS, has just started production at WARNER BROS. Burbank studios under the direction of EDMUND GOULDING; the cast is headed by CLAUDE RAINS, Fay Bainter, Kay Johnson, Bonita Granville, Donald Crisp and James Stephenson, the latter a popular English stage and screen player . . . ANTONIO MORENO and JOHN CARROLL has been signed for important parts in MONOGRAM'S "ROSE OF THE RIO GRANDE", MOVITA'S first starring vehicle; the star first achieved prominence for her role as the native girl in "Mutiny on the Bounty"; William Nigh, who directed Jackie Cooper in "Boy of the Streets", will also handle the megaphone on "Rose of the Rio Grande" . . . marriage and tangled pasts figure in "INFIDELITY", Ursula Parrot's latest novel, purchased by METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER for screen production; the story deals with a married couple whose happiness is endangered when another woman brings to light phases in the husband's past, and the ensuing love tangle forms the basis for a dramatic plot . . . TONY MARTIN and MARJORIE WEAVER, who recently completed important parts in the 20TH CENTURY-FOX musical, "SALLY, IRENE AND MARY", will play the romantic leads in "KENTUCKY MOONSHINE", musical comedy starring the RITZ BROTHERS, now in preparation for production . . . WARREN HULL has been assigned to a leading role in RKO RADIO'S "HAWAII CALLS", newest musical starring vehicle for Toronto's BOBBY BREEN; Hull joins a cast which already includes Irvin S. Cobb, Ned Sparks, Mamo Clark, Juanita Quigley and Pua Lani . . . latest title change on the new DICK POWELL picture for WARNER BROS. is announced as "COWBOY FROM BROOKLYN"; previously the picture, in which Priscilla Lane, Pat O'Brien, Ann Sheridan, Dick Foran and Spring Byington are also featured, was known as "HOWDY, STRANGER", and later as "THE DUDE RANCHER" . . . UNIVERSAL PICTURES this week signed PRESTON POSTER to a three year contract calling for four pictures a year; Foster's first picture will be the Crime Club story, "THE LADY IN THE MORGUE", in which he will portray Detective Crane, the same part he played in "The Westland Case" . . . ALLAN LANE, former Notre Dame gridiron star, is cast opposite JOAN FONTAINE in RKO RADIO'S "CERTIFIED", a comedy of the milk industry; others in the cast include Hedda Hopper, Billy Gilbert, William Brisbane, George Irving and Vicki Lester.



Anna Neagle, in a scene from the Herbert Wilcox production, "Look Out For Love" from the story by Ray Lewis.

TORONTO THEATRES

LOEW'S—Manager Jules Bernstein — 2nd week, Samuel Goldwyn's "Hurricane", starring Jon Hall and Dorothy Lamour. Released through United Artists.

TIVOLI—Manager Dan Krendel — RKO Radio's "Damsel In Distress", with Fred Astaire and Burns and Allen. Also John Litel in "Alcatraz", a Warner Bros. picture.

UPTOWN—Manager Jack Arthur — 2nd week, RKO Radio's "Stage Door", starring Katharine Hepburn and Ginger Rogers with Adolphe Menjou. Also "March of Time".

IMPERIAL—Manager Tom Daley — Errol Flynn and Joan Blondell in "The Perfect Specimen", a Warner Bros. picture.

SHEA'S—Manager Jerry Shea — John Boles and Luli Deste in "She Married An Artist". Also Richard Dix and Fay Wray in "It Happened in Hollywood". Both Columbia pictures.

EGLINTON—Manager Bob Eves — Annabella in "Dinner at the Ritz", with Paul Lukas and David Niven. Also Claire Trevor in "Big Town Girl". Both 20th Century-Fox pictures.

HOLLYWOOD—Manager Raymond Allen — Warner Bros.' "Life of Emile Zola", with Paul Muni. Also Roland Young in London Films' "Man Who Could Work Miracles".

Season's Most Powerful Drama Brilliantly Acted and Staged!

HIS LIFE HINGED ON THE TURN OF A CARD . . .
. . . while the woman he loved and the man he hated looked on!
ALEXANDER KORDA Presents
CLIVE BROOK
Action For Slander
with
ANN TODD • MARGARETTA SCOTT
A VICTOR SAVILLE Production
Directed by TIM WHELAN
From the Novel by Mary Borden
A LONDON FILM
The wrong card turned and ruin enmeshed him. Romance crashed . . . friends fled. A thousand lips condemned him until the lips of one woman saved him!

It Reaches Deep Down and Reveals the Heart of Every Man to Every Women!

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